

CHAPTER 22 ALL IN ONE LIFETIME

I. A New Day Dawning

A. Introduction. World War II aroused South Carolina from nearly a century of suspended animation. The forces and ideas that the war unleashed in the country and in the state, made it impossible for things to remain as they had been.

***B. The Impact of the War**

- *1.** The war led to increased prices for farm products and did more for the recovery of the agriculture sector of the economy than had various New Deal programs.
- *2.** The war also generated a demand for textile products and thus provided a boost for the state's major industry.
- *3.** In 1942, Santee Cooper began producing electricity that supplied the power needed for new industries – many of them especially designed for the production of war material.
- *4.** James F. Byrnes, as Senator from South Carolina, had been a staunch supporter of the New Deal.
 - *a.** In 1941, President Roosevelt appointed him to the United States Supreme Court, but in 1942 he resigned to head up the Office of Economic Stabilization.
 - *b.** A year later, in 1943, President created the Office of War Mobilization and named Byrnes to direct it.
 - *c.** Roosevelt had great confidence in Byrnes' abilities.
 - *i.** The press (and the President), sometimes referred to Byrnes as the "assistant President."
 - *ii.** In 1944, Byrnes was considered for the vice presidential nomination, but Harry Truman was elected instead.
 - *iii.** He accompanied Roosevelt to the famous Yalta Conference.

- *9. Food and gasoline were rationed and many items disappeared completely from store shelves.**

C. Economic Development

1. The economic development spurred on by the war continued unabated in the post war years.
2. Under the leadership of Governor J. Strom Thurmond, the state aggressively sought – and successfully attracted – northern industrial investment.
3. During the 1960s, the state's industrial development and diversification expanded significantly due to a variety of factors.
 - a. In 1954, the State Development Board was created to serve as a focal point for industrial recruiting.
 - b. The state's technical education system was one of the first of its kind in the nation.
 - c. The almost total absence of any labor unions and a willing work force were attractive to many manufacturers.
 - d. South Carolina's excellent road network and the modern facilities at the Port of Charleston also were factors attracting industry.
 - e. By the 1960s, South Carolina enjoyed a reputation as a good place to live.
 - f. By far the most important factor in attracting outside economic development in the 1960s was the state's social and political stability.
4. Tourism became big business in the 1960s.
 - a. The Grand Strand was no longer a resort for Carolinians (North and South), but for folks from all over the country.
 - b. The interstate highway system and air travel brought South Carolina's beaches, golf courses, and historic sites within easy traveling distance of the major population centers along the east coast.

- c. Without air conditioning, there would have been no tourist development.

D. Agriculture

1. South Carolina's agriculture underwent something of a revolution in the post war years.
2. In 1970, the 2 million acres under cultivation were about half the acreage tilled in 1945.
3. In 1945 more than one million acres of cotton were planted, but by 1970 the acreage had dropped to about 300,000.
4. As cotton production declined, land was either planted in pine trees or other crops, such as soybeans, were cultivated.
5. Mechanization, coupled with lack of opportunity, caused rural blacks to continue to leave the state in large numbers.

II. "WE SHALL OVERCOME"

- A. "We Shall Overcome," the theme song of the American civil rights movement of the 1960s was a South Carolina folk song. Like numerous other black folk songs with South Carolina origins such as "Eye on the Prize," it was a song of longing and hope for a better day. A better day, that black South Carolinians knew would come . . . some day. The struggle for equality was long, difficult, and sometimes dangerous.

B. Jim Crow

1. **The 1895 Constitution and the segregation laws that followed separated black and white Carolinians in every possible situation.**
 - a. Public accommodations, factories, schools, and government offices were segregated.
 - b. Disenfranchisement went hand in hand with segregation.
2. Segregation in South Carolina was Ben Tillman's response to his opponents' attempts to persuade black voters to cast the deciding ballots in a race between two white candidates.
3. Although all government officials after Tillman supported segregation until the early 1960s, few were as openly racist as Tillman himself, Coleman L. Blease, or Ellison D. Smith.

C. Outmigration

1. Because of a lack of economic opportunity and discrimination, literally hundreds of thousands of black South Carolinians left the state.
 - a. As late as the decade of the 1960s, more than 100,000 moved elsewhere in search of better opportunities.
 - b. Outmigration slowed during the 1970s.
2. Because of the heavy outmigration of blacks, by 1925, South Carolina blacks were in the minority for the first time since prior to 1820.
 - a. Historically, blacks had constituted a majority of the state's population from 1708-1790 and from 1820-1925.
 - b. Due to continued black outmigration in the 20th century, by 1980, blacks constituted about 31% of the state's population.

D. Politics: 1895-1963

1. One of the effects of the Constitution of 1895 and Jim Crow legislation was the creation of the all white Democratic Party.
 - a. Because there was no Republican Party to speak of in South Carolina between 1877 and the 1960s, the real elections in the state occurred in the Democratic Primary.
 - *b. The "White Primary" became firmly established as an instrument of keeping blacks out of the political process in South Carolina and the rest of the "Solid South."**
 - *i. The "White Primary" was successfully challenged in Texas 1944.**
 - *a. One of the results of the Texas case was that Governor Olin D. Johnson called a special session of the General Assembly which passed 147 laws making the holding of a primary the actions of a private organization, not a function of state government.**
 - *b. With support from the state's Democratic Party establishment, Johnson defeated long-time senator**

Ellison D. "Cotton Ed" Smith whose race-baiting speeches were blamed for giving the state a bad image.

***ii. Judge Waties Waring of Charleston ruled in two cases in 1947 and 1948 that blacks could become members of the Democratic Party and could participate in the party primary.**

***2. The state's political leadership resented the civil rights planks in the 1948 Democratic Party platform.**

***a. In protest, they bolted and joined with other conservative Southerners to form the short-lived Dixiecrat Party.**

***b. South Carolina's Governor J. Strom Thurmond was chosen as the Dixiecrats' presidential candidate.**

3. Although many South Carolinians still vowed to fight the federal government and the Supreme Court to the bitter end on racial matters, two events in 1963 signaled a dramatic change in official attitudes.

a. Before he left office in 1963, Governor Ernest F. Hollings addressed the General Assembly on the eve of the desegregation of Clemson and counseled moderation, remembering the lessons of a century earlier, and obedience to the law.

b. After his inauguration, Governor Donald S. Russell held a barbecue on the grounds of the Governor's Mansion to which all citizens of the state were invited; it was the first integrated state social occasion since 1877.

E. Politics 1963-Present

***1. The Voting Rights Act of 1965, enforced by federal marshals, allowed more than 220,000 black South Carolinians to vote.**

2. In 1970, the first blacks were elected to the General Assembly since 1895.

3. It is now an accepted fact of South Carolina's political life that blacks will run for office at all levels.

4. Black South Carolinians have identified mainly with the Democratic Party, although in the 1980s blacks have begun to associate themselves in small numbers with the Republican Party.

F. Education

1. Under the Constitution of 1895, schools at all levels were segregated.
 - a. Black schools were notoriously underfunded.
 - b. Black teachers with comparable education and certification as whites were not paid the same salaries until 1945.
2. Under Governor James F. Byrnes, more than \$100 million was spent on new school construction so that, at least in physical facilities, South Carolina's public schools would be "separate, but equal."
- *3. Clarendon District #22 was one of the cases consolidated in the 1954 Brown Decision outlawing segregation.**
- *4. The United States Supreme Court ruled in the Brown Case that desegregation must proceed with "all deliberate speed."**
5. Ten years later, desegregation still was no more than a token reality because the General Assembly opposed the decision and established a School Segregation Committee to come up with ways to evade complying.
- *6. The state's previously all-white universities, Clemson and the University of South Carolina admitted black students in 1963 without any incident – a marked contrast to the events in Alabama and Mississippi.**
- *7. In 1970, South Carolina's public schools were ordered totally integrated through the creation of a "unitary school system."**
 - *a. With federal Justice Department officials monitoring and approving their actions, the state's school districts, in one fell swoop, merged their formerly black and white schools.**
 - *b. Busing of children to achieve racial balances was undertaken.**

- *c. School identifies, many of them black, were obliterated overnight as high schools and middle schools were consolidated.**
- *d. In many districts, particularly those with black majorities in the Lowcountry, whites fled to already established parochial or private schools or created new ones.**

***G. The End of Jim Crow**

- *1. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed segregation in public accommodations.**
 - *a. The continued segregation of the only bowling alley in Orangeburg led to demonstrations and a confrontation between authorities and students from South Carolina State and Claflin College.**
 - *i. The results of the confrontation left 3 young black men dead and 28 students wounded.**
 - *ii. The events at Orangeburg shocked South Carolinians.**
 - *b. Because of Orangeburg, the state government hastened to pressure local governments into complying with the Civil Rights Act.**
- 2. The violence at Orangeburg had so upset the state's more responsible citizens, that they opposed any and all who advocated violence.
 - a. In 1970, in Lamar, protest over integration of schools led to violence.
 - i. A mob overturned a school bus.
 - ii. State officials reacted promptly and arrested the perpetrators.
 - b. In 1970 state elections, South Carolinians voted for candidates who espoused racial moderation.
- 3. In 1983, the General Assembly made the Rev. Martin Luther King's Birthday, an optional state holiday.

H. Summary. The "White Only" and "Colored Only" signs have long since disappeared from waiting rooms, lunch counters, and drinking fountains. A

social and political revolution has occurred in South Carolina in the years since World War II. The changes have not always come easily, but they have happened. And, with the unfortunate exception of Orangeburg and Lamar, they occurred with a minimum of confrontation and violence. Why was South Carolina's social revolution so different from that in the rest of the South? Harvey Gantt, the first black student to enter Clemson and alter the Mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina, said: "If you can't appeal to the morals of a South Carolinian, you can appeal to his manners." In the final analysis, it was the gentility of an older South Carolina that reasserted itself and peacefully, but sometimes reluctantly, dismantled the last vestiges of Tillman's segregated society.

III. The Tricentennial

- A. In 1970, the state celebrated the 300th anniversary of the first permanent settlement at Old Towne.
- B. Celebrations were held in every county and the Tricentennial encouraged a revival in local history.
- C. In stark contrast to earlier celebrations, the events of 1970 included all segments of the state's population.
- D. Summary. The Tricentennial was the fitting close to a tumultuous period in the state's history. The war and the economic changes that followed roused South Carolina from its lethargy. Traditional agricultural practices, labor, and crops were abandoned. And, most significantly, there were just as profound revolutions in the state's political and social relations.

IV. Readings

- 1. Edgar, South Carolina: A History, Chapter 22
- 2. Bass, Porgy Comes Home, pp 3-8, 34-38, 67-78, 115-122
- 3. Byrnes, All in One Lifetime, pp. 161-394
- 4. Clark, Echo In My Soul
- 5. Horne, South Carolina, 426-458, 466-485
- 6. Gordon, Sketches of Negro Life, pp. 192-234
- 7. Jones, South Carolina, pp. 658-691
- 8. Kovacik & Winberry, South Carolina, pp. 137-142, 154-155, 159-205

9. Lander, A History of South Carolina, pp. 169-175, 206-239
10. Lesesne, A History of the University of South Carolina
11. Tindall, America, pp. 1133-1147, 1164, 1190, 1194, 1242-1245, 1282-1288

V. A Not So Solid State In The "Solid South"

A. Introduction. The "Solid South" had come about as a reaction to Reconstruction. White South Carolinians and their compatriots in other Southern states became intensely loyal to the Democratic Party and strongly opposed to the Republican party and black participation in politics as symbols of "Yankee oppression." There was little to give South Carolinians any uneasiness about their place in the Democratic Party until the President and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt began to encourage black participation in party affairs.

***B. The "Cotton Ed" Smith Affair**

- *1. At the 1936 Democratic Convention in Philadelphia, Smith walked out of the convention when a black clergyman was called upon to deliver the invocation.**
- *2. Smith, an avowed and outspoken racist, used the incident effectively in his 1938 reelection campaign.**
- *3. The Smith story and his being singled out by FDR for defeat in 1938 were the first indications that all might not be well for white South Carolinians in the Democratic Party.**

***C. The Dixiecrat Movement**

- *1. When the Democrats adopted a platform espousing civil rights for black Americans, many South Carolinians supported the formation of a Southern-oriented party that soon was labeled "Dixiecrat."**
- *2. South Carolina's Governor J. Strom Thurmond was chosen as the party's nominee and ran on a platform favoring segregation.**
3. South Carolina voters overwhelmingly supported Thurmond's candidacy.

***D. The 1950s**

- *1. The nomination of Adlai Stevenson of Illinois in 1952 upset South Carolinians, including Governor James F. Byrnes.**

- *2. Byrnes organized a “Democrats for Eisenhower” movement, but the state’s voters cast a majority of their ballots for Stevenson.**
- *3. In 1956, Stevenson and Eisenhower were again the presidential candidates.**
 - *a. Independent groups pledged to Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia was formed.**
 - *b. The electorate split three ways, with the Democrats winning a plurality of 45% of the votes.**

E. The Development of the Republican Party

1. During the decades of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, the modern South Carolina Republican Party was created primarily by individuals who were unhappy with the Democrats.
 - a. During the 1940s, some conservative South Carolinians left the Democratic Party over the economic issues of the New Deal.
 - b. During the 1950s and 1960s, thousands more began to look for another political home because of the national party’s support for civil rights.
 - c. Newcomers to the state, unhappy with the “old-boy” system running the communities in which they lived, often took the initiative in helping the struggling Republican Party.
2. These new Republicans faced an old guard remnant from pre-New Deal days.
 - a. Among the leaders of this old guard was the Rev. I. DeQuincey Newman, a black civil rights activist who was a delegate to the 1956 Republican National Convention.
 - b. Gradually, the old guard Republicans moved over to the Democrats.
3. Two individuals, David Dows of Aiken and J. Drake Edens of Columbia worked tirelessly to create a viable statewide Republican Party.
4. The Election of 1964 was a watershed in the history of the Republican Party.

- a. Senator Strom Thurmond switched parties and campaigned all over the South for the GOP ticket.
- b. Thurmond's move, even more than the 1962 senatorial campaign of William D. Workman, gave credibility and respectability to the South Carolina Republican Party.

F. Two Party Politics

1. Beginning in 1966, the GOP seriously contested local and legislative offices.
 - a. After some initial difficulties, the party has been successful in contesting elections at all levels – although Democrats still control both houses of the General Assembly.
 - b. In 1975, James B. Edwards became the first Republican elected governor since Reconstruction.

G. Summary. Two party politics, a strong Republican Party, and black voters – the worst fears of the 19th century white South Carolinians have come to pass. For more than 50 years, white voters have been deserting the Democrats because of the positions of the national party. Many have found a home in the Republican Party, but a surprisingly large segment have remained independent and simply vote for the candidate of their choice without regard to party.

H. Readings

1. Edgar, South Carolina: A History, Chapter 22
2. Bass, Porgy Comes Home, pp. 34-50
3. Horne, South Carolina, 454-455, 496-497
4. Jones, South Carolina, pp. 658-671
5. Key, Southern Politics, pp. 130-155 and index for "South Carolina"
6. Koviack & Winberry, South Carolina, 153-158
7. Lander, A History of South Carolina, pp. 78, 169-186